

314-316 Seventh St., NW (Commercial Building)  
(Morton's)  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC- 495

HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
333-

PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
333-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Morton's, a four-story, early Twentieth Century commercial building, fully occupies a forty-seven by one hundred foot site on Seventh Street near the northeast corner of Square 432. Its white-painted brick-clad facade maintains the street line of its smaller contiguous neighbors, an older three-story building to the south and the newer Riggs Bank to the north. The symmetrical facade is organized as a brick frame with large wood framed windows filling the voids. The second and third floors are treated as three vertical units; four brick piers create a narrow central bay and two wide flanking bays. These piers are capped by a horizontal member of the same width as the piers. Above a string course consisting of three projecting brick courses, the attic windows continue the divisions of the lower floors. A final plain brick parapet caps the facade.

The brick surface is treated as an almost undifferentiated plane with openings punched into it. A flush surround, consisting of stacked stretchers flanked by stacked headers at the sides and a soldier and rowlock course at the top, frames the large window openings. Four square medallions (located at the crossings of verticals and horizontal above the third floor) and the string course mentioned above form the only other variations in the brick plane. Within the openings, slender wood frames with classical details contain wood casement and center pivot windows. A metal entablature with metopes and narrow triglyphs separates the second and third floor window groups and is surmounted by an iron railing.

The modern aluminum and glass storefront is organized into five symmetrical bays that do not correspond to the facade above; The second and fourth bays are deeply recessed and lead to a central entry.

The red-brick west facade now faces a park across a public alley. On this wall, the ground floor openings and those of the narrow end bays have segmental heads; the two wide central bays are square and headed with steel lintels. All windows are double-hung steel sash. A steel door is in the northern bay, and the wider doorway in the center is sealed with galvanized steel.

The roof slopes from east to west and supports mechanical equipment at the western side.

On the interior of the department store, each floor is treated as an open space with service areas at the rear. A row of columns marks the lot line that divides the store into two separately owned, but functionally integral, sections. An open staircase in the northwest corner of the space connects the upper floors to the ground floor.

#### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Morton's was designed for the separate owners of two adjacent lots by the Washington firm of Donn and Deming. It was built by the Boyle-Robertson Construction Company in 1914 (Building Permit Numbers 4200 and 4201, 4/15/14). A storefront, which altered the full width of the ground floor facade and extended back thirty feet from the building line, was designed by A. B. Mullet and built in 1924 (Building Permit 1761, 8/14/24). Unspecified repairs and alterations were made following a fire in 1945 (Building Permit Number 288229, 8/22/46).

Vestiges of classical organization and detail remain in the facade, which is built of simple materials. Although the original base treatment has been lost, the upper floors suggest columns and attic. This treatment, as well as the centralized symmetrical organization, give the facade a sense of repose. Steel technology is utilized to allow the generous window openings. The composition is similar to those on F Street, Square 254, designed by Marsh and Peter, although the materials and details in this case are much less elaborate. No stone moldings or accurate classical details are used; the medallions, brick string course, simplified window surround and window mullions are the only ornamentation incorporated in this otherwise simple building.

The building's size and organization allow it to respond adequately to the district, neither detracting from nor significantly adding to the area. As they now stand, Morton's and its neighbors are important in continuing the scale and rhythm of Seventh Street from the north, but stand isolated in the newly created lawn that fills the remainder of Square 432.

September 1979

ADDENDUM

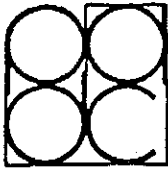
314-316 Seventh St., NW (Commercial Bldg)  
(Morton's)  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-495

HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
333-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D C 20013-7127



PENNSYLVANIA  
AVENUE  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

426 13TH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

ANDERSON NOTTER/MARIANI  
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT  
DEVROUX & PURNELL  
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS  
DAVID McLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES  
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT  
MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES  
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BUILDING DOCUMENTATION  
CODE IDENTIFICATION MAP  
SQUARE 432

This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 432, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 432, see HABS No. DC-484.

For documentation of individual buildings within Square 432, see:

- |   |   |                 |
|---|---|-----------------|
| A | Riggs National Bank, 7th and D Streets Office, 318 7th Street | HABS No. DC-496 |
| B | 314-316 Seventh Street, NW (Morton's)                         | HABS No. DC-495 |
| C | 312 Seventh Street, NW (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)                  | HABS No. DC-494 |
| D | 310 Seventh Street, NW (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)                  | HABS No. DC-587 |
| E | Kann, S. and Sons, Market Space, between 7th and 8th Streets  | HABS No. DC-365 |

